



NATIONAL CONFERENCE *of* STATE LEGISLATURES

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Pre-Registration for Young Voters

Requirements that define when a person can pre-register to vote ahead of their 18th birthday vary state by state.

Eleven states permit people who are younger than 17 years 6 months to pre-register as voters. These registrants are not permitted to vote until they reach the age of 18.

California – 17-year-olds may pre-register (Elec. Code §2102(d))
Colorado – 16 and 17-year-olds may pre-register (C.R.S. §1-2-101(2)(a)(I))
Delaware – 16 and 17-year-olds may pre-register (Del. Code Ann. Tit.15, §1701(b))
Florida – 16 and 17-year-olds may pre-register (Fla. Stat. § 97.041)
Hawaii – 16 and 17-year-olds may pre-register (HRS §11-12)
Louisiana – 17-year-olds may pre-register (L.R.S. §101 A (2))
Maine – 17-year-olds may pre-register (21- M.R.S.A. §155)
Maryland – 16-year-olds may pre-register (Elec. Law §3-102)
Oregon – 17-year-olds may register (ORS §247.016)
Rhode Island – 17-year-olds may register but not vote; 16 year-olds may pre-register (RI Gen. Laws §17-9.1-33)
West Virginia – 17-year-olds may pre-register (W. Va. Code §3-2-2)

Four additional states explicitly state the youngest age when people may register to vote.

Alaska – within 90 days preceding 18th birthday (§15.07-040)
Georgia – people at least 17 years 6 months may pre-register (Ga. Code Ann. § 21-2-216(c))
Iowa – people at least 17 years 6 months may pre-register (Iowa Code Election Laws §48A.5(2)(c))
Texas – Registration is open to people at least 17 years 10 months-old (Tex El. Code Ann § 13.001)

Four other states are not explicit about a registration age, but indicate that registration can take place at any point when the registrant will be 18 by the next general election. This has the effect of permitting teens younger than 17 years 6 months to register to vote, in some cases.

Kansas – Registrants must state that they will be 18 by the next general election (KRS §25-2306)
Minnesota – any person who will be an eligible voter at the time of the next election may register (Minn. Stat. §201.061)
Nevada – any person who will be an eligible voter at the time of the next election may register (NRS 293.485)
Wyoming – any person who will be 18 on the date of the general election (Wyo. Stat. §22-3-102)

The remaining states do not address how early registration may take place. Common practice is to permit registration when the registrant will be 18 by the next general election.

For information on states that permit teens who will be 18 by the next general election to vote in primary elections, contact NCSL.

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For questions or updates, contact NCSL's elections team at 303-364-7700.